

Colossians 1-2

THEME: CHRIST, THE FULLNESS OF GOD TO US

CHAPTER 1:

I. Background

V. 1

1. This letter or epistle was written by Paul to the saints, (verse 2) who constitute a church in Colosse. The church probably met in Philemon's house in that city. (Philemon 2)

2. As far as we know Paul never visited Colosse but had only heard about their faith and love. (verse 4) The church was probably started as a result of Epaphras (a Colossian; Col. 4:12) being converted while visiting Ephesus where Paul, being there for three years (Act 20:31) taught in the school of Tyrannus for a space of two years. (Acts 19:9-10) His message while there was heard throughout all Asia. (Act 19:26)

3. Epaphras, then under Paul's guidance, had gone back home and proved to be a faithful servant in that city ever since. (Col. 1:7) Thus it seems that Epaphras was the human instrument the Lord used to start the church in Colosse.

4. Colosse, a city in Asia, now in the country of Turkey, forms about a ten mile triangle with the cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis in which Epaphras also ministered (Col. 4:12-13)

5. This epistle seems to have been written about 62 AD during Paul's first stay in prison. Epaphras was also in prison with Paul (Philemon 23) thus informing Paul of the condition of the church in Colosse, both the good and the bad. Paul thus moved by the Holy Ghost (II Peter 1:21) wrote this epistle along with Philemon and possibly Ephesians and sent them with Tychicus and Onesimus, Philemon's runaway slave. (Col. 4:7-9; Eph. 6:21-22)

6. The bad news Epaphras gave Paul, consisted of the news that error was being propagated in Colosse. This error could be labeled "Gnosticism" which puts knowledge in the place of Christian faith. These Gnostics believed and taught that they

possessed a secret and mysterious knowledge which was not accessible to those outside their group. This could be called "Mysticism." All of this was combined with Jewish "ritualism." What a mixture! I should say a "false mixture," which tries to offer believers something more than they already have in Christ.

7. These false teachers implied that what Christ has done is not enough and needs something additional. In their opinion, the fullness of life in God could not be achieved through Jesus Christ only. Therefore, fullness must be sought through works of the Law, self discipline, worshipping of angels, and a special, secret knowledge. Thus, Paul writes this epistle to refute Gnosticism and Mysticism by lifting up Christ as the fullness of God to us.

8. We will use that as the theme for Colossians: "Christ, the Fullness of God to Us."

9. It is interesting to note that Paul did not go into much detail about the error but instead he presented the truth to them. If you will study and learn the truth you will automatically recognize counterfeit when it shows up in whatever form it may come.

10. Be reminded that the error of which Paul writes the Colossians to correct is not dead today. It is still alive and being presented in different forms by different faces.

II. Introduction V. 1-8

1. "Paul" = the human instrument the Lord chose to write His word to the church at Colosse. (II Peter 1:21)

2. "Apostle" = one sent on a mission to represent another person, the person sent being given credentials and the responsibility of carrying out the orders of the one sending him; Paul met the qualifications of Acts 1:21-22 for being an apostle on the road to Damascus by special revelation as I Cor. 15:8 bears out.

3. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed in flesh); the Saviour of mankind.

4. "Christ" = the Anointed One; the Messiah of the OT.

5. "Will" = desire; pleasure; choice; Paul wants his readers to clearly understand that he is not an apostle by his own choosing, nor by man's election, but that he was called, ordained,

commissioned, and sent by God.

6. "Timotheus" = Timothy; Paul clearly distinguishes between himself and Timothy, who is a brother and fellow laborer, but not an apostle; Timothy was with Paul when he wrote the letter and may or may not have been the secretary that wrote this epistle as Paul dictated it; Paul only wrote the closing (Col. 4:18) probably due to some problem with his eyesight. (Gal. 4:15; 6:11)

7. "Brother" = from the same womb; refers to the saved who are all from the womb of God (Godly sorrow; Holy Ghost conviction).

8. The honorable prominence that Paul gave to Timothy marked him out for future leadership and prepared the people to whom this epistle was written to accept Timothy as they would Paul.

V. 2

1. "To" = indicates who this epistle was written to.

2. "Saints" = set apart; saved; Christians; those who have had a "sanctifying work" of the Holy Spirit completed in their lives (I Peter 1:2; John 16:8-11); further described as "faithful brethren in Christ"; these saints made up a local church (a group of baptized believers who meet together to glorify God) probably meeting in Philemon's house in the city of Colosse. (Philemon 2)

3. "Faithful" = trustworthy; steadfast; unswerving.

4. "Brethren" = from the same womb; refers to the saved.

5. "In Christ" = reveals the spiritual location of all saints.

6. "At Colosse" = reveals the physical location of the saints to whom Paul was addressing this letter.

7. "Grace" = sanctifying grace, not justifying, for he is writing to saints who were already justified; this grace enables the saints of God to overcome obstacles in their daily living and keep on keeping on for the glory of God; we have access (freedom to enter through the assistance or favor of another) into this grace by faith (Rom. 5:2); this word was also used as a greeting among the Greeks.

8. "Peace" = sanctifying peace, not justifying of Rom. 5:1, for he is writing to saints who were already justified; this peace is the peace of God that passes all understanding, even in trouble times (Phil. 4:6-7); a state of Christian tranquility; we are fighting from victory not for victory; this word was used and is still used now as a greeting among Hebrews.

9. Paul may have been using these terms only as a greeting to the Greeks and Hebrews, but I think he meant more than a greeting as we have just defined above.

10. "From" = this grace and peace comes from God whom he identifies as our Father (personal) and the Lord Jesus Christ.

11. "Lord" = supreme in authority; He becomes one's Lord when saved not at some later time.

12. The Greek construction refers to God as *our Father* as the source of this grace and peace and also to God as our *Lord Jesus Christ* as the source of this grace and peace. Even in this introduction Paul is saying Jesus Christ is God, a truth the Gnostics denied.

V. 3

1. "We" = Paul and Timothy.
2. "Give thanks" = to be grateful and thankful.
3. "Praying" = speaks of prayer to God and gives the idea of definiteness and directness in prayer, with the consciousness on the part of the one praying that he is talking face to face with God; while praying Paul expressed his thanks to God.
4. "Always" = continually; this refers to "give thanks" which indicates that Paul was continually thankful for what he heard concerning (for) the Colossians.
5. "To God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" = the Greek reads "to the God (there is no other) and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" = Paul establishes the fact Jesus Christ is the Son of God; he keeps lifting up Jesus Christ because the Gnostics kept putting Him down.

V. 4

1. "Since we heard" = having heard; Epaphras told them (verse 7-8); this reveals the point where Paul began being continually thankful concerning the Colossians; Paul had heard and was thankful for two things, their faith and love, which was motivated by hope (v. 5), which caused them to bring forth fruit. (v. 6)
2. "Faith" = belief; conviction of the truth; refers to conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and a holy zeal produced by it; described as "your" = refers to the Colossians being in possession of such faith; it became theirs because it was given them by grace as a result of the work of the Holy Ghost. (Eph 2:8; John 3:27)
3. "In" = a preposition of rest; this is not referring to their initial act of saving faith but having placed their faith in Christ Jesus, the Colossians now rest in Him.
4. "Love" = agape; God kind of love; love in action; love produced in the heart of the yielded saint by the Holy Ghost (Rom. 5:5); a love which impels one to sacrifice oneself for the object or person loved.
5. "All" = everyone; collectively and individually.
6. "To" = towards; a preposition of motion and means into; reveals that the Colossians' love reached into the very heart of all the saints.
7. "Saints" = saved.

V. 5

1. Our first impression of this verse is that "hope" is what Paul was giving thanks to God for, and this can be applied but their "hope" was an incentive (motivation) to them in their faith in the Lord Jesus and their love to the saints, encouraging both and causing both to make progress and grow more intense.
2. "For" = on account of; reveals clearly that this hope was active, working in the saints, energizing their faith and love to a greater intensity.
3. Faith, works by love, and the ground of their love is found in the hope set before them.
4. "Hope" = desire for some good with an expectation of obtaining it; refers to what was ahead after death for the saints of God.
5. "Laid up" = to be laid away; reserved; put to one side; to be reserved for one, awaiting him; the tense reveals continuous action meaning that what is being laid up is continuously being added to if they continue in faith and love. (Rev. 14:13)
6. "In heaven" = refers to the third heaven where the throne of God is and all saints will be there with Him (spirit, soul, and body) after the rapture.
7. "Whereof" = which; refers to the hope they would have one day in the future in heaven which they had been told about.
8. "Heard before" = one word in the Greek; refers to the time when they first heard the gospel, they were told not only that they would be saved from the *penalty* of sin but also from the *presence* of sin--glorification of the saints body in heaven one day in the future; this word seems to indicate a contrast with what they were now hearing; it seems there were teachers of falsehood trying to lead these saints away from the Word of truth they had already heard.
9. "Word of truth" = refers to the "gospel" = the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus (I Cor. 15:1-4) and everything around it such as His virgin birth, sinless life, vicarious death, burial, resurrection, ascension, ministry of intercession, and His bodily coming again.

V. 6

1. "Which is come unto you" = which is alongside you; which reached you; the idea is that the true gospel had snuggled up close to the Colossian saints and they had taken it into their hearts.
2. "As it is in all the world" = the gospel was making progress over all the known world (Roman Empire) and it did not change from one country to another or from one culture to another; the idea here is that the error being propagated at Colosse was localized to

an extent; it was not spread over all the world; in fact there were different errors being taught in different localities but not so with the gospel, it is the same over all the world.

3. "Bringeth forth fruit" = one word in the Greek; refers to deeds and actions of those who respond to the gospel according to the Word of God; describes the inner working with an outward expression; John the Baptist required fruit for one to be baptized (Mat. 3:8); Jesus said to the Pharisees fruit would come if the inside was clean (Mat. 23:26); the tense is continuous action.

4. Paul said when the gospel comes in saving power, fruit will come. Fruit was being produced in all saints in the known world as well as in the Colossians. Notice it started the moment (day) they heard and knew the grace of God in truth.

5. "Knew" = to become thoroughly acquainted with; to know accurately; refers to their having understanding and being saved.

6. "Grace" = undeserved favor; refers to the merciful kindness by which God, exerting His holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ.

7. "The grace of God in truth" = the phrase means the grace of God in its genuine simplicity, without any alteration.

8. All saved bring forth fruit when saved even though it may not be the same quantity. (Mat. 13:23) The same grace that saves one also teaches them. (Titus 2:11-12) The Holy Spirit who comes to abide in one produces His fruit in them--all who are saved, no exception. (Gal. 5:22-23; Mat. 7:16-18; James 1:17-21)

9. What is on the inside does come out!!!

V. 7

1. "As ye also" = these words indicates that what they had practiced was learned from Epaphras.

2. "Learned" = to be informed; to increase one's knowledge; carries the idea of having understanding which means to put together the facts of information as pieces of a puzzle so one can see the entire picture.

3. "Of" = from; a preposition indicating source.

4. "Epaphras" = probably Paul's convert at Ephesus; the Lord's human instrument which is necessary (Rom. 10:13-15); he carried the gospel message to Colosse and probably became their pastor.

5. "Our dear fellowservant" = these words express Paul's closeness to Epaphras.

6. "Dear" = beloved; esteemed; this word reveals that Paul was a personal friend of Epaphras even though he may not have known him all that long.
7. "Fellowservant" = a fellow worker; a colleague; a servant (bondslave) of the same Lord.
8. "For you" = refers to the time Epaphras was with the Colossians and even now in prison he remained a faithful minister of Christ for the Colossians.
9. "Minister" = one who executes the commands of another (Christ); described as "faithful" = one who can be relied on; trust-worthy; he was faithful to minister the Word of God to them; being faithful is all that is required of a servant. (I Cor. 4:2)

V. 8

1. "Who" = Epaphras.
2. "Also" = he not only declared the Word of God to the Colossians but also declared to Paul their love in the Spirit.
3. "Declared" = to make manifest; to make known by relating.
4. "Us" = Paul and those with him.
5. "Your love" = shows possession; the Colossians possessed a supernatural love which was produced by the Spirit, because they were in the sphere of the Holy Spirit (saved).
6. The Colossians had a love for Paul (although they had never seen him) that only the Holy Spirit could produce. This kind of love is produced in all who are saved. (Rom. 5:5, Gal. 5:22-23) If it is not present, it is evident that that person is not saved. (I John 3:14; 5:1)

III. Paul's Opening Prayer for "Fullness" and a "Worthy Walk." V. 9-14

V. 9

1. "For this cause" = on this account; because of this; namely the good report from Colosse as given in verses 4-8.
2. "Also" = indicates that they had already been praying for them and would continue to do so, even in a greater way; Paul knew that Satan fights you more as you grow; therefore, he wanted to assure the Colossians of his prayers.
3. "Since the day we heard it" = refers to the report that Epaphras brought to Paul concerning the Colossians.

4. "Do not cease" = will not leave off; the tense is continuous action; this does not mean that Paul would be on his knees 24 hours a day praying for them but it means Paul had them on his mind and every time he prayed he was reminded of them and their need.
5. "Pray" = general word of prayer meaning "to offer petitions"; the tense is continuous.
6. "To desire" = to ask; to beg; a specific word for prayer which signifies to ask for something to be given, giving prominence to the thing asked for rather than the person.
7. Basically Paul asked for two things signified by the word "that." Really the second is the outcome of the first:

1. "That ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will."

8. "Ye" = the Colossians; applies to us as well.
9. "Might" = may.
10. "Be filled" = to cause to abound, to furnish a supply liberally; to fill full; the tense is point action which reveals that Paul prayed for them to be filled and remain full.
11. "Knowledge" = precise and correct knowledge; full knowledge; denotes a larger and more thorough knowledge; a knowledge which grasps and penetrates into an object, that object being the will of God for their lives.
12. The Gnostics who claimed to have a superior knowledge, were trying to induce their error in the church at Colosse. Therefore, Paul prays that the saints will be filled with the "real" superior knowledge--the will of God for their lives.
13. "Will" = desire; choice; pleasure; refers to the moral aspect of God's will for the conduct of their lives.
14. Paul is praying that all saints might have this knowledge which indicates it was not just for a favored few as the Gnostics taught.
15. This thorough, perfect knowledge of God's will should be in the sphere of "all wisdom and spiritual understanding."
16. "Wisdom" = broad and full of intelligence; this is general word and embraces the whole range of mental faculties.
17. "Understanding" = to set or bring together; refers to the special faculty of intelligence or insight which discriminates between the false and the true, and grasp relations in which things stand to each other; this is like putting the pieces of a puzzle together where you can get a view of the entire picture.
18. Understanding is the faculty of deciding in particular uses while wisdom gives the general principles.

19. "Spiritual" = belonging to the Spirit of God; this word really identifies both wisdom and understanding, thus showing that both are to proceed from the Holy Spirit; this stands in opposition to fleshy wisdom, worldly wisdom, or wisdom of man. (II Cor. 1:12; I Cor. 2:4; James 3:15-17)

2. "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord." V. 10

V. 10

1. "Ye" = the Colossians; applies to us as well.
2. "Might" = may.
3. "Walk" = to order one's behavior; to conduct one's self.
4. "Worthy" = in a manner worthy of; of like value; worth as much; having the weight of (weighing as much as) another thing; these same words are used in Eph. 4:1 where it means for your conduct (walk) to weigh as much as your profession (what you say; if you say you are saved, let your life show it in conduct); here it means that the saint's conduct ought to weigh as much as the character "of the Lord"--that is He is to be their example in life, and a copy must be like the example (I Peter 2:21) means to live a life that measures up to what one says the Lord has done for him; this is a result of being filled with the knowledge of His will; right knowledge will lead to right behavior.
5. "Unto all pleasing" = so as to please the Lord in all things.
6. Paul gives four participles that explains how saints are to walk worthy unto all pleasing and the tense of each one reveals a continuous process, an habitual lifestyle.

1) "Being fruitful in every good work."

7. "Being fruitful" = to bear fruit; bring forth; speaks of deeds; all good ground does (Mat. 13:23; good ground is the only ones that are saved in this parable).
8. "Work" = deeds; acts; described as "good" = upright; honorable; the only good work anyone can do is what that person allows the Lord to do in and through him.

2) "Increasing in the knowledge of God."

9. "Increasing" = to cause to grow; become greater; speaks of inward Christian growth.
10. "In" = into; implies motion into or towards.

11. "Knowledge" = thorough and perfect knowledge; same word as in verse 9.
12. "God" = refers to the trinity of the Godhead--Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
13. Paul desires to know Him in Phil. 3:10 which was after he was saved. In II Peter 1:5-8, Peter says we can increase in this knowledge if we will add those seven things mentioned to our foundation of faith. Of course this can only be done by faith and through the aid of the Holy Spirit.

3) "Strengthened with all might."

V. 11

1. "Strengthened" = to be able; to have power; to make strong; the tense is continuous action.
2. "Might" = strength; ability; power; these two words are from the same Greek root word; they speak of the power which gives one the ability to do something; Paul desired that the Colossians be strengthened.
 - A. For the performance of duty.
 - B. To meet temptations.
 - C. To bear up under the various trials of life.
3. All this can only be accomplished "according to his glorious power" and not by any human means.
4. "Power" = manifested power; described as "glorious" = majesty; glory; splendor; magnificence; means this power is accompanied by the Lord's glory; it is the manifested power of the great and glorious God and it tends to promote His glory and show forth His praise; it is the Lord's goodness manifested to men.
5. "According to" = indicates that this power is not proportioned simply to the recipient's need, but to the Divine supply.
6. "Unto" = to; results in all patience and all longsuffering, both of which are to be exercised with joyfulness.
7. "Patience" = steadfastness; constancy; endurance; a calm temperament, which suffers evil without murmuring or discontent; the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith by even the greatest trials; the quality of an individual who does not surrender to circumstances or succumb to the trials he faces; the verb form means "to remain under" thus, it means to remain under trials in a God-honoring way so as to learn the lesson they are sent to teach,

rather than attempt to get out from under them in an effort to be relieved of their pressure, because the saint knows Rom. 8:28 is true.

8. "Longsuffering" = patience; endurance; constancy; steadfastness; perseverance especially as shown in bearing troubles or ills; almost the same definition as "patience" but there is a difference; "patience" refers to patience shown under trials, difficulties, and hardships while "longsuffering" is patience exhibited under ill-treatment by persons; it is the long endurance that does not retaliate.

9. The man who is "patient" is one who under a great siege of trials, bears up, and does not lose heart or courage. (Rom. 5:3)

10. The man who is "longsuffering" when having to do with injurious persons, does not allow himself easily to be provoked by them, or blaze up in anger. Love allows one to do this. (I Cor. 13:4a)

11. "Joyfulness" = cheerfulness; gladness; joy; part of the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-23)

12. Paul added "joyfulness" because there is a danger when you exercise patience and longsuffering that gloominess or sourness of disposition will be produced. But if the Christian is filled with joy, gloominess and sourness of disposition will be gone and he is able to meet all his trials with a joyful sense of mastery, whether the trials are things or persons.

13. It takes the glorious power of the Lord to practice this!

4) Giving thanks unto the Father.

V. 12

1. "Giving thanks" = to be grateful and express our thanks; the tense is continuous action, which means to express constant thanksgiving.

2. "Father" = refers to God the Father as distinguished from the Son; our thanks are due the Father because He is represented as the great Author of the whole plan of salvation and as He who sent His Son to redeem us.

3. "Which" = who; God the Father is not a *which* but a *who*, a person not a thing.

4. "Made meet" = one word in the Greek; means to make sufficient; render fit; qualify; refers to the standing of the saints (us) in Christ, not their character.

5. "Partakers" = share; proportion; an assigned part.

6. "The inheritance" = that which is allotted; portion; this speaks of a general inheritance in which each individual has his share.

7. "Saints" = saved.

8. "In light" = the sphere or region in which the inheritance of the saints is situated; this speaks of that heavenly state, complete and free from every imperfection, to which the true disciples of Christ will be exalted; also refers to the saint's walk on earth. (Eph. 5:8; I John 1:7; Pro. 4:18)

9. We ought to constantly be giving thanks unto the Father who made us fit and qualified to share in this inheritance. Within ourselves we were not fit because we were:

A. Without strength (Rom. 5:6; not God-conscious)

B. Blinded. (II Cor. 4:3-4)

C. Ungodly. (Rom. 5:6)

D. Sinners. (Rom. 5:8)

E. Enemies. (Rom. 5:10)

V. 13

1. We were not fit but He made us fit. How?

A. Delivered us from the power of darkness.

B. Translated *us* into the kingdom of His dear Son.

2. "Who" = God, the Father.

3. "Hath delivered" = to draw to one's self; to rescue; means we were rescued by His strong arm, as a mighty conqueror; the tense is point action and refers to the time of our conversion; when saved we were rescued and are eternally rescued.

4. "Power of darkness" = refers to the power exerted over us in that dark kingdom to which we formerly belonged = the kingdom of Satan, the characteristics of which is darkness; the emblem of sin, error, misery, and death.

5. But the saint can thank God the Father for delivering him once and for all time.

6. "Hath translated" = to transpose; transfer; remove from one place to another; speaks of a change of situation or place; the tense is point action and refers to the time of our conversion.

7. "Into" = implies motion into or toward (unto).

8. "Kingdom of his dear Son" = "unto the kingdom of the Son of His love."

9. "Dear" = agape; God kind of love. (John 3:16)

10. "The Son" = the object of the Father's love and therefore to whom the kingdom is given; His kingdom is one of light.

11. The saints:

A. Are subjects of a new kingdom.

B. Are under different laws.

C. Have a different Lord.

D. Belong to a different country.

E. Have passed from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, from the empire of sin, ignorance, and misery to one of holiness, knowledge, and happiness.

12. There are no half ways with God. He brought us out to bring us in. He brought the children of Israel out of Egypt to bring them into the land of Canaan. And even though they did not go in at Kadesh-Barnea, He led them through the wilderness 40 years so that He might bring them in. (Deut. 6:21-23; 8:2) He finished what He started and He will for you, too, if you will only allow Him to do so. (Phil 1:6; I Thess. 5:24)

13. As a result of this we need to constantly be giving thanks to God the Father for His glorious plan of salvation.

V. 14

1. "In whom" = refers to the Son of His love; the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "We" = saints.

3. "Have" = possess; tense is continuous action, which means once we obtain redemption there will never be a time where we will be without it.

4. "Redemption" = a releasing obtained by the payment of a ransom; carries the idea of "buying back" something that had been sold; we were sold in Adam to sin and Satan as a slave but released when we received the payment of the ransom--His blood; this word is preceded by the definite article "the", thus "the redemption" = Paul is reminding the Colossians of the most important work of all history--the redemptive work of Christ, who on the cross paid the ransom price for the sin of mankind and when one receives that by grace through faith he is saved from the penalty of his sin (Rom. 3:24); the complete truth of this word is set forth in three Greek words:

A. "Agorazo" = to buy in the slave market; translated "bought" in I Cor. 6:19-20, and "redeemed" in Rev. 5:9.

1) Christ bought us in the slave market of sin by His own blood; therefore, we are His private property.

2) The subjects of redemption are sold under sin when Adam sinned.

3) We are under the sentence of death. (Rom. 6:23; John 3:18)

4) Now I am His because I have been bought with a price.

B. "Exagorazo" = to buy out (implies to bring out also) of the slave market; the payment of a price to recover from the power of another; translated "redeemed" in Gal. 3:13; the redeemed are never to be put up for sale in any slave market again.

C. "Lutroo" = to set free by paying a price; to release on receipt of the ransom; translated "redeem" in Titus 2:14.

5. "Through" = primary preposition denoting the channel of an act; this redemption is made possible through His blood.

6. "His blood" = refers to Christ's blood being shed on the cross; it was not enough for His blood to be shed in scourging or crowning with thorns; it required His death because the life of the flesh is in the blood (Lev. 17:11); the innocent had to die for the guilty and His blood sprinkled on the mercy seat in heaven atoned (done away with the penalty of all who believe; Rom. 3:25) for our sin and delivered us from the penalty of sin.

7. "Forgiveness" = to send from one's self; dismissal; a result of being redeemed; refers to being saved from the guilt of sin.

8. "Sins" = not only the root sin but the fruit as well--sins.

9. One who has been saved can say that he is saved from the penalty of sin--redeemed and also saved from the guilt of sin--forgiven. (Heb. 10:17; Psa. 103:12) If the Lord has forgotten the saint's sins, why should we live with guilt? We have been redeemed and forgiven. That is something to be thankful for!

IV. Doctrinal--"That Ye May Be Filled." V. 1:15-2:23

1. Christ the fullness of God in creation. V. 15-17

V. 15

1. "Who" = refers back to verse 13 to the Father's dear Son--Christ.

2. "Image" = likeness.

3. "Invisible" = unseen; that which cannot be seen.

4. This phrase means that Christ represents to mankind the perfections of God, as an image, figure, or drawing does the object which it is made to resemble. Jesus is the very stamp of God the Father as He was before Incarnation (John 17:5) and is now. (Phil. 2:5-8) The Lord said in John 14:9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." This means that the Son is the exact reproduction of the Father, a derived image. Did you ever hear one say, "You are a spitting image of your dad." That is what Jesus was of His Father.

5. "Firstborn" = the Greek implies two things.

A. Priority to all creation. This reveals the absolute pre-existence of Christ the Word. (John 1:1) Since our Lord existed before all created things, He was not created. Since He was not created, He is eternal. Since He is eternal, He is God. Since He is God, He cannot be one that issued from a source (deity) of which the Gnostics claimed, even though He proceeds from God the Father as the Son. (John 1:14; God became flesh)

B. Sovereignty over all creation. This means that He is the natural ruler, the acknowledged head of God's household. Again, He could not have issued from a source as the Gnostics claim.

6. "Every" = all.

7. "Creature" = creation.

8. Paul, using the Hebrew as a reference to the usual distinctions and honors conferred on the firstborn, is saying that Christ occupied a preeminence over all God's creation similar to the firstborn of the Hebrew. He does not say nor does he mean to represent Christ as a creature.

V. 16

1. "For" = because; on account of the fact that; introduces the reason why he referred to Christ as the firstborn.

2. "By Him" = in Him; this is not instrumental but locative; this is not denying the instrumentality for that is brought out in the second "by Him," but this is putting the fact of creation with reference to its sphere and center; within the sphere of His personality, resides the creative will and the creative energy, and in that sphere the creative act takes place; this means creation is dependent on Him.

3. "All things" = the all things; the definite article "the" in the Greek gives the collective sense--the all; the whole universe of things.

4. "Were created" = to make something out of nothing; the tense speaks of a definite historical event; the whole of creative activity is summed up in Christ including the angels in heaven and every thing on earth, the visible and invisible.

5. "Heaven" and "earth" = together comprehend all space.
6. "Visible" = open to view.
7. "Invisible" = that which cannot be seen.
8. "Thrones" = place where rulers (kings) sat; refers to kingly powers. (Psa. 75:6-7; Pro. 21:1)
9. "Dominions" = powers, whether angelic or human.
10. "Principalities" = refers to angels, both holy and fallen (demons).
11. "Powers" = the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possess or exercises.
12. These four words refer to both holy and fallen angels, demons, and man, and are aimed at the "Mysticism" error in the church in Colosse. They were practicing angel worship, while degrading Christ who is above all angels.
13. Second "were created" = perfect tense which means that which the Lord created remains created no matter what the Gnostics and Mystics taught; the permanence of the universe rests on Christ far more than on gravity.
14. Second "by him" = through Him; refers to His intermediate agency; He is the Creator. (John 1:3; Heb. 1:2)
15. "For him" = unto Him; all things as they had their beginning in Him tend (wait; look) to Him as their consummation, to depend on and serve Him. (I Cor. 15:28).
16. Christ is the central activity in the work of creation and that was a complete denial of the Gnostics' philosophy. (Rev. 4:11)

V. 17

1. "He" = Christ, the personal pronoun is used for emphasis; it emphasized the personality of Christ.
2. "Is" = same base word as "I Am" of OT (Exo. 3:13-14) and "was" of John 1:1; means existence without origin and declares the pre-existence of Christ.
3. "Before" = above; before all things in existence; refers to the fact that He has preeminence over all things.
4. "By Him" = in Him.
5. "Consist" = to hold together; to cohere; the tense is perfect which means a past completed action with existing results; Christ created all things, put them in order and

they continue to remain in order; we can take one instance--the action of gravitation, which keeps in their places things fixed and regulates the motions of things moving which is an expression of His mind; He impresses upon creation that unity which make it a "kosmos" (an ordered system) instead of a "chaos" (an unformed mass).

6. This lets us know salvation is of the Lord for only He can bring to order a "chaos." And that is what every lost sinner is--a "chaos."

2. Christ the fullness of God in the church. V. 18-19

V. 18

1. "He" = personal pronoun used for emphasis; He, Himself, the Father's dear son (verse 13) and none other.
2. "Head" = symbol of authority; the inspiring, ruling, combining, and sustaining power; the mainspring of its activity; the center of its unity; the seat of its life.
3. "Body" = used as a metaphor, just as a human body had the head which is in control of the body, the church is controlled by its head, Christ.
4. "Church" = a called out assembly; a group of baptized believers who meet together to glorify the Lord; the only called out assembly that exists today is the local church of which there are many which are only types of the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23) which will be called out at the rapture and then there will be a called out assembly in heaven.
5. The use of the term "body" referring to the church suggests three things:
 - A. It designates the church as a living organism, not an organization, composed of members vitally connected to one another.
 - B. It points to the church as the means through which Christ accomplishes His purposes and performs His work in the world. (Mat. 16:19)
 - C. It shows that the union between Christ and His church constitutes a very vital and intimate one.
6. "Who is" = in that Christ is.
7. "The beginning" = source; origin; speaks of being the beginning or originator of the church which was built during His earthly ministry and not Pentecost, where it was empowered (Mat. 16:18; I Cor. 12:28--"first apostles" = indicates their calling was the beginning).

8. "Firstborn from the dead" = firstfruits out from among the dead, never to die again; the OT as well as the NT records instances where men were raised from the dead but Jesus is the first one raised never to die again.

9. "Preeminence" = chief; hold the first place.

10. "Might have" = may come to.

11. "All *things*" = refers to spiritual things as well as physical.

12. Christ's resurrection entitles Him to have preeminence in all things.

V. 19

1. "For" = because.

2. "Pleased" = to think it good; to be well pleased with.

3. "*The Father*" = in italics which means these words are not in the Greek but supplied by the translators because the verb calls for either "God" or "the Father" as the subject; due to "the Father" being used in verse 12 the translators supplied that here and it is accurate.

4. "In him" = Christ.

5. "Fullness" = there is a definite article "the" in the Greek which denotes the sum-total of divine powers and attributes.

6. "Dwell" = inhabit; to be at home permanently.

7. The Gnostics believed that many spirit beings filled the space between God and the world. And any communication between God and the world and between the world and God had to pass through the spheres in which these spirit beings exercised rule. They believed that Christ was one of many such spirit beings. But Paul makes it clear the fullness--the sum total of divine powers and attributes--permanently dwelt in Christ and was not divided between any other so called "spirit beings."

3. Christ the fullness of God in redemption. V. 20-23

V. 20

1. "Having made peace" = to bind together; to make one again; man was separated from God in Adam when he sinned, but Christ the last Adam has made peace (make one again) between God and man by shedding His blood on the cross; this does not mean that He effected peace by His death but He laid the foundation for it--He had done that which would secure it.

2. "Through" = primary preposition denoting a channel of an act.
3. "Blood of his cross" = the blood shed on the cross of Calvary, His (Christ's) cross; that which satisfied the just demand of the broken law.
4. "By" = through; primary preposition denoting a channel of an act.
5. "Him" = Christ.
6. "To reconcile" = to change thoroughly from; to change from one state to another; restoration to original unity; to bring back into a proper relationship.
7. "All things" = refers to mankind and also this material universe which was cursed because of sin; these are identified as things in earth and things in heaven.
8. "Himself" = refers to the Father.
9. Second "by Him" = reemphasis of the fact that Christ is the One and only One who can reconcile all things.
10. First "in" = on; upon; a preposition implying contact with an object and is opposite of "under"; this is important because Paul does not include the lost in hell or "in" the heart of the earth in the "all things"; any portion of Scripture must be considered in light of what the rest of Scripture teaches. (II Peter 1:20; II Tim. 2:15)
11. "Things on earth" = refers to man and the earth cursed because of Adam's sin; the earth will be reconciled (restored to original unity) because of Christ's finished work on the cross (Rom. 8:21-22); and mankind can be reconciled, for Christ laid the foundation on the cross, if we will exercise faith in His blood shed on the cross of Calvary, thereby having peace. (Rom. 5:1)

V. 21

1. "You" = the saints at Colosse; refers to all saints.
2. "Sometime" = formerly; aforetime; at sometime; before saved.
3. "Alienated" = to be shut out from one's fellowship and intimacy; the tense is perfect, which reveals a completed action in past time with existing results; man was alienated in Adam and remained in that condition until reconciled.
4. "Enemies" = hostile in an active sense.
5. "Mind" = faculty of thinking; deliberate and purposed enmity (hostility).
6. "Works" = acts; deeds; things done; described as "wicked" = of a bad nature or condition, thus, mischief making; delighting in injury; doing evil to others; dangerous and destructive; outward exhibition of their alienation.

7. It is a tragedy to see men use their minds actively against God but that's what these Colossian saints had done. The same is also true of every unsaved individual.

8. "Yet now" = indicates God's intervention and reveals a contrast.

9. "Hath reconciled" = to change from one state to another; to bring back in a proper relationship; the tense is point action past time referring to the time these saints were saved.

10. "He" = Christ.

V. 22

1. The change spoke of in verse 21 was all accomplished "in the body of his flesh through death." This phrase was to combat the false teaching of the Gnostics and Mystics who thought that reconciliation could be accomplished by a spiritual being only and attached little or no value to the work of Christ in a body composed of flesh. By using this phrase, Paul excludes the work of angels in reconciliation since they had no body of flesh.

2. "Body of his flesh" = refers to Christ robed in human flesh through a virgin's womb.

3. "Through" = primary preposition denoting a channel of an act.

4. "Death" = the Greek has a definite article "the" indicating Christ's death on Calvary; the death of His body was the means in producing this reconciliation; this is equivalent to the phrase "blood of his cross" = in verse 20; it was not enough for His blood to be shed in scourging or crowning with thorns; it required His death because the life of the flesh is in the blood. (Lev. 17:11)

5. "To present" = to place beside or near; to offer.

6. "You" = saints.

7. "Holy" = to set apart; separation from world defilement unto God; not on the outside only, but signifies an attitude of heart.

8. "Unblameable" = spotless; without blemish; free from imperfection like an OT animal sacrifice that was free from defects.

9. "Unreproveable" = that which cannot be called into account; blameless; unaccused; designates one against whom there is no accusation or charge made against.

10. "His" = the Father.

11. "Sight" = to look down in; speaking of a searching, penetrating gaze of God who knows and sees all.

12. These three adjectives give a marvelous picture of complete purity--*positive* and *negative, internal* and *external*.

13. Christ's ultimate purpose in this glorious process of reconciliation is to present believers before God at His second coming as those who have become Christ-like through the sanctification process. It is in this process that all things work together for good since the Lord predestined all saved to be conformed to Christ's image. (Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 5:26-27; I John 3:2)

V. 23

1. "If" = since; condition determined as fulfilled.

2. "Continue" = to persist in; adhere to; stay at or with; abide by.

3. "Faith" = speaks of faith as exercised in the gospel message.

4. Continuance in the gospel as it was preached by Paul would show that the person was saved and as a result they would be presented holy, without blemish, and unaccused before God. Paul was addressing the truly born again Colossians, not the unsaved professors (stony ground hearers) who followed the false teachers at Colosse.

5. It is not the retention of salvation that is in Paul's mind, but their possession of it would be shown by their continuance in the gospel. (John 10:27,5; Heb. 3:6,14)

6. "Grounded" = to lay a foundation; refers to a firm foundation; the tense is perfect which speaks of an action completed in the past time having present results.

7. "Settled" = steadfast; immovable; refers to the stability of a building; suggests inward strength which comes from the Lord but possessed by believers.

8. "Be not moved away" = not stirred to move elsewhere; refers to the Colossians not to follow false teaching which has no hope.

9. "Hope" = desire for something good with an expectation of obtaining it; refers to the hope given by the gospel.

10. "Gospel" = the good news of Christ dying for our sins, being buried, rising the third day, and all that is involved in this happening--virgin birth, sinless life, substitute, sacrifice, mercy seat, ascension, intercession, and bodily coming again.

11. "Have heard" = to understand; to perceive the sense of what is said; implies obedience to what was heard with the physical ear.

12. "Preached" = to proclaim after the manner of a herald; used of public proclamation of the gospel with the suggestion of formality, gravity, and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed.

13. "Creature" = creation; refers to mankind who is under heaven.

14. "Every" = all; this means that the gospel had been so extensively preached with much zeal and labor that it could be said that it was proclaimed to everybody; everybody had access to it because it was preached to all the known world at that time.

15. These Colossians who were saved had been placed on the foundation (the rock), the Lord Jesus, with the result that they were grounded and settled. (I Cor. 3:11; Mat. 7:24-25) This is a once-for-all act on the part of God, having permanent results when a sinner applies faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who follow false teaching prove that they were never placed on the true foundation and that they were only professors and not possessors--lost. (James 2:17)

16. "Made" = become; not of his doing but on the Lord's calling.

17. "Minister" = one who executes the commands of another; general term for service; refers to one who serves.

18. "Whereof" = refers back to the gospel.

19. Paul regarded it as the highest honor to be entrusted with the message of mercy to mankind and considered it a privilege to suffer for that cause. (I Tim. 1:11-12)

4. Christ the fullness of God in Paul's ministry. V. 24-29

V. 24

1. "Who now rejoice" = "Now I am rejoicing" = refers to Paul.

2. "Now" = at present; refers to Paul's first prison stint in Rome from where he is writing this letter.

3. "Rejoice" = to be glad; to rejoice exceedingly; the tense is continuous action. (Rom. 5:3)

3. "In" = in the midst of not "for"; while enduring (I Thess. 5:18); Paul was surrounded with sufferings in his prison in Rome, but he was rejoicing in the midst of them.

4. "Sufferings" = afflictions.

5. "For" = on account of.

6. "You" = the Colossians; but he regarded himself as suffering on account of his labor in preaching to the heathen at large not just for the Colossians alone.

7. "Fill up" = to fill up in turn.

8. "Which is behind" = that which is lacking; deficiency.

9. "Afflictions" = tribulation; distress; a pressing together; this word is never used of the vicarious (endured or done by one person substituting for another) sufferings of the Lord Jesus; therefore, this does not refer to Christ's sufferings on the cross, for that is a finished work and will never be duplicated but it refers to His suffering endured in His earthly ministry such as:

- A. Suffering for righteousness' sake.
- B. Suffering incurred through exhausting service.
- C. Heart-suffering due to opposition of religious sinners.
- D. Suffering which was a result of persecution.

10. These sufferings which happened during our Lord's personal ministry were curtailed by reason of His limited life on earth and were continued in His servants as the preaching of the Word was carried on. Therefore, all the saints down through the years are partakers of these sufferings when they are faithful to the obligation they have of preaching the Word. (II Tim. 3:12)

11. This is what Paul was speaking of when he said, "fill up that which is behind." Paul said he would fill up his part. There is plenty left for Paul and for each of us in our time.

12. Note: Paul does not mean that there was anything lacking or deficient in the sufferings which Christ endured in making an atonement which was to be supplied by His followers, so that man's merits might be added to His in order to secure the salvation of men. That is what the Catholics teach and that is false. Paul attaches no atoning value whatever to his own suffering. (verse 18)

13. "Flesh" = refers to Paul's body.

14. "His body" = the church = a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to glorify the Lord; refers to each local church which is a type of all saints being called out at the rapture and assembled in Heaven. (Heb. 12:23)

V. 25

1. "Whereof" = refers back to the church; Paul was a minister of the gospel (verse 23) and also the church.

2. "Made" = became; before Paul was saved he persecuted the church. (Phil. 3:6)

3. "Minister" = servant.

4. "Dispensation" = management of household affairs; stewardship; administration; speaks of one who is given the responsibility of administering the laws regulating the proper conduct of affairs in the household.

5. "According to the dispensation of God" = refers to the arrangement which God has made; He designed that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles and in accordance with that arrangement He called Paul to be a minister. (Gal. 1:15)

6. "Given" = commissioned.

7. "For you" = not only for the Colossians only but for the heathen at large.

8. "Fulfil the word of God" = to preach fully; to fully discharge his office, so that the divine arrangement (dispensation) would be fully carried out in the preaching of the gospel to the Gentile the same as it had been to the Jews.

9. Paul was given the responsibility of preaching the Word of God and seeing to it that it was guided rightly in the initial impact upon the Roman Empire.

V. 26

1. "Mystery" = hidden truth; not the idea of secrecy; simply signifies a truth which was once hidden but now is revealed; a truth, which without special revelation, would still have been unknown (I Cor. 2:9-11); there is a definite article "the" in front; thus, "the mystery" which is "Christ in you."

2. "Hath been hidden" = to hide; to conceal from; the tense is perfect which means a completed action past time with existing results. (I Cor. 2:7-8)

3. "From ages and from generations" = ages refers to the time the world (mankind) has been in existence, which is made up of generations (the successive members of a genealogy) and when used with the preposition "from" means the mystery was hid from the beginning of the ages of the world (mankind); before the beginning of the ages of the world, the counsel of God was ordained, but not concealed, because there were no human beings from whom to conceal it.

4. "But now" = shows contrast; this is now no longer a mystery to the saints.

5. "Made manifest" = to make clear; to be realized; to make visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, whether by words or deeds, or in any other way chosen by the Lord.

6. This mystery is made known only unto His (the Lord's) saints, through human instrumentality (Rom. 10:13-15) by the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 2:9-11)

7. "Saints" = to set apart for God; the root idea is "separation from" to "separation to"; God's designation for believers; those who are saved are saints at the moment they are saved because of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. (I Peter 1:2; II Thess. 2:13)

V. 27

1. "To whom" = refers to the saints.
2. "Would" = desire; to will urging on to action; God "willed" this change from hidden mystery to manifestation and this was all of God's grace and no merit of the saints.
3. "Make known" = to perceive; to have a thorough knowledge of; refers to divinely communicated truth.
4. "Riches" = wealth; abundant; great; plenitude; denotes that which is valuable and abounds.
5. "Glory" = splendor; magnificence; manifestation of that which brings forth praise.
6. The mystery of the admission of the Gentiles to the gospel covenant, now revealed through Paul's preaching, was divinely rich and glorious. The richness exhibited itself in the free dispensation of the gospel to the Gentile as well as the Jew. It was not limited by natural lines. The wealth of the glory of this mystery is "Christ in you" (Colossians who were Gentiles).
7. "Christ in you" = refers to the personal experience and presence of Christ in the individual life of all believers as a result of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; Christ indwells every saint in the person of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-18); this is still somewhat a mystery to us but we must receive what is made known unto us by faith.
8. "Hope of glory" = refers to an expectation of being in heaven; Christ is our hope now (I Tim. 1:1) and the consummation will come. (Rom. 8:18)

V. 28

1. "Whom" = refers back to Christ.
2. "Preach" = to announce; declare; to proclaim publicly; Paul preached, not a system of doctrine so much as a Person, the Lord Jesus (John 12:32); his statements regarding that Person and what He did on the cross constituted the doctrine he preached; the tense reveals continuous action.
3. "Warning" = to put in mind; to admonish; to exhort; this is not referring to warning about danger but admonishing or putting into the mind of every man the claims of the gospel; the tense reveals continuous action.
4. "Every man" = used three times in this verse for the sake of emphasizing the universality (whosoever) of the gospel, a great truth that was endangered by the doctrine of an intellectual exclusiveness taught by the Gnostics at Colosse.

5. "Teaching" = to instruct; the impart instruction; Paul taught every man, the lost as well as the saved; the tense reveals continuous action; some believed Paul warned the lost and taught the saved but the Scripture reveals Paul taught or reasoned in the synagogues which were attended by the unsaved Jews or Jewish proselytes. (Acts 17:1-2; 18:19; 18:28)

6. Notice Paul's preaching involved warning and teaching. He carried on a balanced ministry as he sought to take truth to all men, not just a few.

7. "Wisdom" = broad and full intelligence; used of the wisdom which belongs to man; denotes mental excellence in the highest and fullest sense, expressing an attitude as well as an act of the mind; it comprehends knowledge and implies goodness, including the striving after the highest ends, as well as using the best means for their attainment; refers to *warning* as well as *teaching*.

8. "May present" = to place beside or near; refers to the time the saints will appear before the Lord; Paul said to the Corinthians basically the same thing in II Cor. 11:2 where he is alluding to the custom of the Greeks of having an officer who's business it was to educate and mold young women (especially those of rank) designated for marriage, and then to present them to those who were to be their husbands, and if this officer through negligence permitted them to be corrupted between the espousal and the consummation of the marriage, great blame would fall upon him; Paul felt such a responsibility toward those he ministered to.

9. "Perfect" = mature; refers to being spiritually mature and complete; could apply to being fully instructed as distinguished from a novice (new convert; babe in Christ).

10. Paul preached by warning and teaching with everything that was in him because he wanted to present every man to Christ at His coming as spiritually mature persons. This was a goal Paul strived to reach.

V. 29

1. "Whereunto" = reveals what exertion Paul underwent to reach his goal.

2. "Labour" = to grow weary; exhausted; to labor with wearisome effort; to labor to the point of exhaustion.

3. "Striving" = agonizing; to contend with an adversary; to wrestle, straining every fiber of your body to the utmost toward the goal.

4. "Working" = power in exercise; used only of superhuman power; Paul's striving was done "according to his working"--superhuman power. (Phil. 4:13)

5. "Worketh" = to be operative; the tense reveals continuous action.

11. "Mightily" = in power, like dynamite. (I Cor. 15:10; Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 3:20)

Chapter 2:

5. Christ the fullness of God in every Christian's life. V. 1-23

V. 1

1. This chapter comes to the heart of the problem, for here Paul denounces the false teachers and asserts clearly the sufficiency of

Christ for every deed. He gives three warnings and these warnings are needed just as much today as in his day.

1) Beware of empty philosophies. V. 1-10

2. Webster defines "philosophy" = love and pursuit of wisdom by intellectual investigation and moral self-discipline.

3. "Would" = desire; wish.

4. "Knew" = get knowledge of; to understand; to have an absolute knowledge of the facts.

5. "What great" = how great.

6. "Conflict" = struggle; refers to the arena of the contest where the "striving" of Col. 1:29 was held; refers to the anxious care, the mental conflict, and the earnest concern which he had in their behalf in view of the dangers to which they were exposed from these Gnostics and Mystics.

7. "For" = a preposition of replacement; in their behalf; not just the Colossians (you) but also for the church at Laodicea, which was only about 10 miles from Colosse and closely connected to the work because Epaphras also ministered there; he also had an inward struggle for even those saints which had never met Paul = "*for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh."

V. 2

1. "That" = in order that; a very strong Greek word often used to introduce statements of purpose; Paul is about to express the purpose of the great conflict he spoke of in verse 1.

2. "Hearts" = the soul as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes and endeavors.
3. "Comforted" = to console; to encourage and strengthen by consolation; to call to one's side to aid; like all other Christians during this time, they were no doubt exposed to trials and persecutions and needed comfort from each other; many times when we are persecuted it is so that we can comfort others. (II Cor. 1:3-4)
4. "Being knit together" = to make to come together; to unite; refers to a firm union; this can only be done in the sphere of "love."
5. "Love" = agape; God kind of love; love in action; produced in the heart of a saint by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 5:5)
6. "Unto" = result in; refers to what would be the result of being knit together in love; implies a goal to reach toward.
7. "Riches" = wealth; in context refers to abundance and the fullness of understanding.
8. "Full assurance" = firm persuasion; settled conviction.
9. "Understanding" = to set or bring together in the mind; refers to the special faculty of intelligence or insight which discriminates between the false and the true, and grasp relations in which things stand to each other; this is like putting the pieces of a puzzle together where you can get a view of the entire picture; in context Paul is referring to the mystery of Col. 1:26-27.
10. "Acknowledgement" = precise and correct knowledge; refers to fully and openly acknowledging or confessing this mystery because they have a fuller, clearer, more thorough knowledge than just knowing the facts.
11. "To" = this preposition is the same as "unto"; refers to what would be the result of being knit together in love; implies a goal to reach toward.
12. "Mystery" = hidden truth; not the idea of secrecy; simply signifies a truth which was once hidden but now is revealed; a truth which, without special revelation, would have been unknown (I Cor. 2:9-11); refers to the Godhead, of which Christ is a part.
13. "Of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" = Paul desired that they would acknowledge the essential nature of God, as the Father and as Christ; the Gnostics and Mystics did not believe that Christ was God and Paul wants to make it plain that Christ was God and in Him "dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (verse 9)

V. 3

1. "Whom" = Christ and none other.

2. "Hid" = stored up; this is an adjective describing "treasures" and is plural in number.
3. "All" = each and every one; Christ is the great treasure-house where all wisdom and knowledge needful for man to be found--not in the Gnostics and Mystics.
4. "Treasures" = wealth; deposit; it is common to compare anything valuable with "treasures" of silver and gold; the idea here is, that in reference to the wisdom and knowledge needful for us, Christ is what abundant treasures are in reference to the supply of our wants.
5. "Wisdom" = broad and full of intelligence; mental excellence in the highest and fullest sense.
6. "Knowledge" = understanding (putting together) of facts and truths.
7. These are hidden in Christ whether the Gnostics have discovered them or not, but every believer knows by fresh and repeated discovery.

V. 4

1. "And this I say" = Paul explains why he has made this great claim for Christ at this point in his discussion.
2. "Say" = to affirm; maintain; to point out with words.
3. "Lest" = for fear that.
4. "Any man" = someone; refers to the Gnostics and Mystics.
5. "Beguile" = to deceive by false reasoning; to lead astray by false reasoning; refers to being lead away from truth.
6. "Enticing words" = persuasive words; artful words; smooth arguments such as used by the Greek philosophers; refers to speech adopted to persuade in a bad sense, thus leading others into error. (Rom. 16:17-18; Pro. 1:10)
7. The art of persuasion is the height of oratory, but it easily degenerates into trickery and flashy deceit. Paul denied that in his ministry in I Cor. 2:4.

V. 5

1. Even though Paul could not be with them in person (flesh), he was with them "in the spirit" = speaking of human spirit, not mysticism or spiritualism, but "in the heart" he was there, loving them, serving them, and suffering with them, because he had a deep interest in the church at Colosse.

2. "Joying" = to rejoice exceedingly; to be glad; Paul was rejoicing because of their order and steadfastness.
3. "Beholding" = to see with the mind's eye; to turn the thoughts or direct the mind to a thing; consider; Paul could do this because of Epaphras' report of them in Col. 1:6-8.
4. "Order" = a military term speaking of an orderly array of soldiers; refers to the military line, unbroken and intact; a few stragglers had gone over to the Gnostics, but there had been no panic, no breach in the line; the church as a whole remained true to the doctrine it had been taught; this brought joy to Paul.
5. "Steadfastness" = another military term meaning to make solid or make steady; refers to the solid part of the line which can and does stand the attack of the Gnostics; this brought joy to Paul just as a military commander experiences a certain satisfaction from observing his unit in an orderly array.
6. They were solid in their "faith in Christ."
7. "Faith" = to trust; to rely on; to commit; refers to living or serving faith which issues from saving faith; their faith was in Christ, who cannot be shaken or moved.
8. In verses 6-10 Paul tells the saints at Colosse four ways how they can continue to overcome these empty man made philosophies.

a. Walk in Christ. V. 6

V. 6

1. "As" = in the same manner; like as.
2. "Therefore" = accordingly; Paul is writing to the saints acknowledging that they were saints; he always referred to those who had made a profession of faith as a saint even though some of them were not saved.
3. "Received" = to take to one's self; to join to one's self; refers to being saved. (John 1:12)
4. "Christ" = has the definite article "the" thus "the Christ"; this is the English word for NT Greek word which corresponds to the OT Hebrew word for The Messiah or the Anointed One, identified as Jesus the Lord.
5. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed with flesh); the Saviour of mankind.
6. "The Lord" = supreme in authority; master; controller; owner; Jehovah of the OT.
7. "Walk" = to live; to regulate one's life; to conduct one's self; to order one's behavior; the tense is continuous action.

8. "Him" = Christ.

9. Walk as you received Christ. How does one receive Christ?

A. Through the Word. (John 3:5; I Peter 1:23); now walk in the Word. (Micah 4:2)

B. By the Spirit (I Cor. 12:3); now walk in the Spirit. (Gal. 5:16; John 16:13)

C. By grace (Eph. 2:8); now walk in the grace we have access to. (Rom. 5:2)

D. Through faith (Eph. 2:8); now walk in faith. (II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 4:12)

E. By love (John 3:16); now walk in love. (Eph. 5:1-2)

b. Grow up in Christ. V. 7

V. 7

1. "Rooted" = to render firm; to fix; establish; refers to a person being thoroughly grounded; the tense is perfect which means a completed action, past time with existing results; thus meaning at the point of being saved they were rooted and have a present result that they are firmly anchored; this word is a metaphor of a tree which reminds us of Psa. 1:1-3.

2. "Built up" = to finish the structure of which the foundation has already been laid; the tense is continuous action thus means "being constantly built up"; a metaphor of construction, expressing the idea of allowing God to continue His work of construction in the believer's life; it is encouraging to know God is not finished with the believer, but He patiently continues His work of construction in them.

3. "In him" = Christ.

4. "Stablished" = to make firm; establish; the tense is continuous action thus it means "constantly be established."

5. "The faith" = the whole body of God's revealed truth delivered once to the saints. (Jude 3)

6. "Taught" = to instill doctrine into one; to explain or expound a thing; to impart instruction; this was probably done by Epaphras who was taught by Paul while he was at Ephesus. (Col. 1:7)

7. "Abounding" = to be in abundance, to be more than enough; to remain over.

8. "Therein" = refers to the faith.

9. "Thanksgiving" = the outward expression of overflowing thanks to the Lord that you have become acquainted with truths so precious and glorious; the grateful acknowledgment of God's goodness in praise and prayer. (Psa. 100:4; I Thess. 5:18)

10. Continuing to grow up in Christ is a positive preventive from drifting into false teaching (empty man-made philosophies).

c. Make Christ the test. V. 8

V. 8

1. Test every high sounding religious philosophy by asking, "Does it give Christ the place of pre-eminence?" Almost every religious system today gives Christ an eminent place, but only true Bible Christianity gives Him the pre-eminent place. Thus, this warning.

2. "Beware" = common word for warning; look out; see to it; keep a watchful eye, ever open; the tense is continuous, thus, be constantly looking out.

3. "Lest any man" = let no one.

4. "Spoil" = to carry off booty; to carry one off as a captive and slave; to lead away from the truth and subject to one's sway; has the idea of kidnapping.

5. "Through" = primary preposition denoting a channel of an act.

6. "Philosophy" = love of knowledge and wisdom; Paul does not condemn knowledge and wisdom (Col. 1:9), but only this false philosophy (knowledge falsely named) being taught by the Gnostics at Colosse.

7. "And" = even; giving an explanation of this philosophy.

8. "Vain" = empty; devoid of truth; futile; fruitless; without effect; refers to contents, thus this philosophy as to content is empty.

9. "Deceit" = a deceiving or lying, thus leading astray; therefore, this philosophy is an empty lie.

10. "After" = according to.

11. "Tradition" = that which is handed down from generation to generation.

12. "Of men" = by using these words Paul let's us know that this philosophy being taught was of human origin not of divine origin.

13. Tradition may be good as mentioned in II Thess. 2:15; 3:6. But most is bad as in Mark 7:3. Here it is worthless and harmful, merely the foolish theories of the Gnostics.

14. "After" = according.

15. "Rudiments" = elements; first principle; used in the NT as:

A. The substance of the material world. (II Peter 3:10,12)

B. The first principles of religion, Jewish or Gentile, also describes as "the rudiments of the world" (Col. 2:20), and as "weak and beggarly rudiments" (Gal. 4:9,3), which constitutes a bondage.

C. The "elementary" principles (the ABC's) of the OT, as a revelation from God. (Heb. 5:12)

D. The delusive speculations of Gentile cults and of Jewish theories, treated as elementary principles, "the rudiments of the world," (this verse) spoken of as "philosophy and vain deceit." These were presented as superior to faith in Christ. In Col. 2:18 the worship of angels is mentioned. This was due to the supposition, held by both Jews and Gentiles in that district, that the constellations were either themselves animated heavenly beings, or were governed by them.

16. "World" = kosmos; a harmonious arrangement or order; this identifies this philosophy as belonging to the sphere of material and external things.

17. "Not after Christ" = not according to Christ.

18. Let me summarize if I can. The church at Colosse was being taught by these Gnostics a philosophy that Paul said was of man and not Christ. They taught that Christ was one of the spirit beings and equal with the angels but Paul warned them not to be kidnapped (spoiled) by such teaching--putting angels (rudiments of the world) in the place of Christ. Christ is the yardstick by which to measure philosophy and all phases of human knowledge. The Gnostics were measuring Christ by their philosophy as many men are doing today. They have it backwards. Christ is the measuring stick for all human knowledge since He is the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe.

d. Draw on His fullness. V. 9-10.

V. 9

1. "For" = because; gives the reason for the preceding claim for Christ as the measuring stick of human knowledge as Paul states the heart of his message about the person of Christ.

2. "Him" = Christ.

3. "Dwelleth" = to be at home; this word was used to show the permanent residents of a town as compared with the transient community; the tense reveals continuous action; thus it could read, "In Him there is continuously and permanently at home all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

4. "All" = every bit; the whole; not just certain aspects.
5. "The fulness" = note the article "the"; denotes the sum-total of the divine powers and attributes.
6. "Godhead" = speaks of the personality of the Trinity being present continuously and permanently present in Christ bodily.
7. "Bodily" = bodily fashion; refers to a robe of flesh; means the fullness of the Godhead dwells in a body as opposed to shadow in OT time where the Godhead dwelt above the mercy seat between two Cherubims. (Exo. 25:22; Num. 7:89)
8. The fullness of the Godhead was in Christ before the Incarnation (being robed with flesh through a virgin's womb). (John 1:1,18; Phil 2:6) But this was also true "bodily" after the Incarnation because the Son of God came in the likeness of men. (John 1:14; Phil. 2:7)
9. What a contrast to the human tradition and the rudiments of the world!!!

V. 10

1. "Ye" = refers to the saints.
2. "Complete" = to make full; to cause to abound; a filling up so as to leave nothing wanting and this is "in Him"; the tense is perfect which means a past completed action with existing results; they were made complete the moment they were saved and will ever more remain complete.
3. "In him" = in Christ and none other; in Christ they (saints) find the satisfaction of every spiritual want; therefore, they do not need to worship the angelic powers.
4. "Which" = who.
5. "Head" = chief; supreme; shows the pre-eminence of Christ; in fact He created all things. (Col. 1:16)
6. "All" = each and every one.
7. "Principality" = rule.
8. "Power" = authority; these two words refers to all powers in heaven and earth, of angels and men.
9. If after a person is introduced to Christ, he is taken captive by a man-made system, it is always because he feels he lacks something that Christ cannot supply.

2. Beware of religious legalism. V. 11-17

V. 11

1. "In whom" = by virtue of Christ.
2. "Also" = even.
3. "Ye" = saints.
4. "Are circumcised" = to cut around; to cut off the flesh; in OT time it was outward sign required by God (first told Abraham; Gen 17:9-14) that was to be accompanied by circumcision of the heart, which was also required by God (Jer. 4:4); it was an outward manifestation of what God had done inwardly.
5. But here Paul is not talking about physical circumcision but spiritual, that which is not made by hands but was wrought by the Spirit.
6. "Circumcision" = an ordinance by which it was denoted that all sin was to be cut off or renounced, and that he who was circumcised was to be devoted to God and to a holy life.
7. "Made without hands" = a term used to contrast the new covenant to the institutions, laws, and rituals of the old covenant.
8. "Putting off" = to strip off from one's self as clothes or armor; getting out of one's garment and getting away from them; a strong expression meaning "wholly putting away from one's self."
9. "The body of the sins of the flesh" = this phrase refers to the old Adamic depraved nature (passed to every man after Adam sinned) being crucified when saved (Rom. 6:6); therefore, it was put off in the sense it was rendered inoperative because the power of the sinful nature was broken and it was deprived of its control over the body and this was done "by the circumcision of Christ."
10. "By the circumcision of Christ" = refers to the spiritual circumcision the saints possessed that was effected through Christ, which is that of the heart; all this was obtained by the gospel; therefore, the saints at Colosse had all that was denoted by the ancient rite of circumcision.
11. Let me add; when one is saved the old man (depraved nature) is crucified (Rom. 6:6) and in Gal. 2:20 Paul, by using a perfect tense verb, states that the old man remains crucified. But the flesh is not dead and the deeds of it must be mortified (put to death) daily. (Rom. 8:13) Not the old nature, because it remains dead, but the deeds of the flesh must be put to death daily.

V. 12

1. "Buried with" = having been buried with; to bury together with; all who, in the rite of believer's baptism, are plunged into the water and by so doing declare that they put faith in the expiatory (means of atonement) death of Christ for the pardon of their sins--past, present, and future; therefore, Paul likens baptism to a burial by which man's sins are buried--utterly taken away.

2. "Baptism" = immersion; submersion; the act of making one fully wet; this is water baptism which is a picture of the change wrought in the heart through faith; Paul had just given the spiritual interpretation of circumcision which itself followed Abraham's faith; water baptism (Rom. 6:4) can only follow being baptized by the Spirit into Christ (occurs at the point of salvation; Rom. 6:3); baptized unto His death means the saved are not only dead to sin but they are buried; to return to them is as unthinkable for a Christian as for one to dig up a dead corpse; baptism is an act which identifies publicly with the fellowship of Christ and the church; in Moslem countries a new believer has little trouble with Moslems until he is publicly baptized, then the Moslems know he means business and begins to persecute him.

3. "Wherein also" = in which ordinance; by virtue of that which is signified by the ordinance.

4. "Ye are risen with" = to raise together from mortal death to a new and blessed life dedicated to God; in the symbol of baptism the resurrection to new life in Christ is pictured with an allusion to Christ's own resurrection and to our final resurrection; it is not the water in the baptistery or the river which achieves this spiritual resurrection but faith in the operation of God.

5. "Through" = primary preposition denoting the channel of an act.

6. "Faith" = belief with the predominate idea of trust.

7. "Operation" = divine working; God had power to raise Christ from the dead and He has power to give us new life in Christ by faith; this means salvation is of the Lord.

8. "From" = out from among.

9. The same operation of God that raised Christ from the dead is able to raise your dead spirit to life when faith (which is a gift of God; Eph. 2:8; John 3:27) is applied, and then that person will submit to water baptism which pictures what has already happened in that person's heart. A person who will not submit to scriptural baptism has never been saved.

10. The resurrection of Christ is often represented as the foundation of all our hopes. (I Cor. 15:17-19) As He was raised from the grave to die no more, so is faith in that reality. We are raised from the death of sin to eternal, spiritual life. The belief of this is shown by our baptism--an outward symbol of an inward work.

1. "You" = the Colossian saints who were, for the most part, Gentiles.
2. "Being" = signifying what they use to be. (Eph. 2:1)
3. "Dead in your sins" = lost; dead spiritually; devoid of the life of God and motivated by a totally depraved (corrupted) nature.
4. "The uncircumcision of your flesh" = a phrase referring to them as Gentiles who lived as though they had not by any religious rite or covenant brought themselves under obligation to lead holy lives; they were separated from God before they were saved.
5. "He" = God.
6. "Hath quickened together" = to make alive together with; speaks of all who exercised faith in Him as being no longer separated from Him but are alive in Him.
7. "Him" = Christ. (John 1:4; I John 5:12)
8. "Having forgiven" = speaks of grace and kindness shown to saints to grant a pardon for their sins; the tense reveals a point in past time where their sins were forgiven--at the point of salvation.
9. "You" = us; Paul includes himself in this word.
10. "All" = each and every one; refers to past, present, and future sins.
11. "Trespases" = sins; misdeeds; a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness.

V. 14

1. "Blotting out" = having wiped away; canceled; to obliterate; erase; abolish.
2. "Handwriting" = a manuscript; something written by the hand.
3. "Ordinances" = the rules and the requirements of the Mosaic law which were written by the human hand of Moses but inspired by God. (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21)
4. "Against" = in hostile opposition to; against us because the law comes like a taskmaster bidding us to do (work) but it does not give a desire in our heart or power in our hands to do so; also against us because it comes with its threat of penalty--pain, condemnation, and death; the law was not given to save nor can it save; it only administers condemnation and death as it reveals sin, exceeding sinful. (Rom. 7:7,13)
5. "Contrary" = adversary; opposite to; similar to "against"; Paul used this second word to give double emphasis.
6. "Us" = used twice; refers to Paul as well as the Jews.

7. "Took" = to lift up, bear, and take away; the tense is perfect which emphasizes the permanence of the removal of the handwriting of the ordinances against us; it has been paid and cancelled and cannot be presented again.

8. "Way" = midst.

9. "Nailing it to his cross" = a phrase that shows how Jesus truly identified with sinners by being made sin for us (II Cor. 5:21); it was customary under Roman law to write out a copy of the law that a criminal had broken and nail that inscription above the person's head on the cross on which he was impaled; when Christ died on the cross, God nailed the law to His cross; therefore, it is no longer in our midst.

10. Note: this only applies to those who have exercised faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. If faith has not been applied then forgiveness has not yet been appropriated, but the instant faith is applied forgiveness will be appropriated.

V. 15

1. "Having spoiled" = to disarm; plundered as a victorious army does a conquered country; to strip off and away; this is what Christ did after His resurrection, as He ascended to fulfill his ministry of sprinkling His blood; the demons offered opposition and He stripped them off and away from Himself as He ascended.

2. "Principalities and powers" = refers to Satan and his demons in the atmosphere of this earth.

3. "Made a shew" = to make an example of; to show as an example.

4. "Openly" = without concealment; refers to this being done in the face of the whole universe--a grand victory; a glorious triumph over all the powers of hell; applies to an earthly conqueror, returning from victory, displaying in a triumphant procession the kings and princes whom he has taken, and the spoils of victory; but our Lord did not make a public procession and display on the earth, it was in view of the universe.

5. "Triumphing over" = to celebrate a victory; this triumph was effected by the atonement made for sin by the Redeemer; this word also means to lead in triumph, which was practiced by the Roman generals as they displayed the spoils they had captured in a victorious battle; our Lord lead captivity captive (Eph. 4:8) as He emptied paradise in the heart of the earth of the OT saints and carried them into the third heaven which is where paradise is today (II Cor. 12:1-4); there the whole universe viewed His triumphant victory.

V. 16

1. "Therefore" = in view of what has just been said; in view of what Christ has done for us of which Paul had mentioned four things.

A. He has given us spiritual life. V. 13

B. He has forgiven all our trespasses. V. 13

C. He has blotted out or abolished the "ordinances" that were against us. V. 14

D. He has triumphed over all our foes. V. 15

E. Therefore, you should not go back to observe the ordinances because you are under grace not law, nor should you allow men (Gnostics) to persuade you to.

2. "Let no man" = do not let anyone.

3. "Judge" = take you to task; sit in judgment; implies that no man has a right to impose on you a burden from which Christ has made you free; you are not responsible to man for your conduct, but to Christ; Paul forbids the habit of passing judgment in such matters he is going to state.

4. "In meat or in drink" = means in respect to the various articles of food and drink; tradition Jewish influence caused these Gnostics to teach that the Mosaic laws were binding on all, even on these Gentiles; one problem with the false teachers was that they carried things even farther than the law.

5. "In respect" = in the decision or category; in the matter of; applies to meat and drink as well as the rest of this verse.

6. "Holyday" = a feast day; a festival; refers to the annual Jewish feast days; it is not a holiday, but a holy day, a sacred (set apart unto the Lord) day under the law.

7. "New moon" = refers to the monthly Jewish celebration held in connection with their lunar calendar.

8. "Sabbath *days*" = Saturday; seventh day of the week; refers to a weekly Jewish festival held from sundown (6:00 pm) Friday (on our calendar) until sundown Saturday.

V. 17

1. "Which" = refers to all things mentioned in verse 16.

2. "Shadow" = an image cast by an object and representing the form of that object; general type or resemblance of things to come.

3. "Body" = the reality; substance as opposed to shadow; all that the shadows signified is of, or in Christ. (Heb. 10:1)

4. The observance of such things as mentioned in this section is "religious legalism." These shadows are just transitions (here today and gone tomorrow) and should be discarded in favor of the "body" or reality they now know in Christ.

5. Even those OT sacrifices were only shadows and when offered they only rolled away sin for a short while and had to be offered again and again. But Christ was the real sacrifice that took away sin. (John 1:29) Why would anyone want to take the shadow instead of the real? Which had you rather have, a picture of your mate or their presence? Why would one want to practice religious legalism when they could have liberty in Christ? They would not if they had experienced His saving grace.

3. Beware of man-made disciplines. V. 18-23

V. 18

1. "No man" = no one; nobody.
2. "Beguile of reward" = to decide against; to declare unworthy of the prize; refers to the crown of victory distributed at the Roman games; the admonition is to be on guard lest the "reward" (the crown of victory to which they looked forward) should be wrested from them by the arts of others (false teachers).
3. "Voluntary" = taking delight in; devoting himself to.
4. "Humility" = thinking little of one's self; when coupled with "voluntary", this humility becomes self-conscious, thus ceasing to have any value; really it indicates a false humility or a mock religious attitude that pretends to be spiritual.
5. "Worshipping" = religious worship especially external; that which consists of ceremonies.
6. "Angels" = created beings of God.
7. This was done by the people "intruding into those things which they (he) hath not seen."
8. "Intruding" = inquiring; to enter; investigate; search into; scrutinize minutely.
9. "Those things" = refers to the ranks, orders, and employments (activities) of angelic beings.
10. "Vainly" = in vain; without success or effort; without just cause.
11. "Puffed up" = to inflate; blow up; bear one's self loftily; be lifted up with pride.
12. "Fleshy mind" = mind of the flesh; carnal mind.
13. Paul is saying;

A. These false teachers will lead you astray and deprive you of your reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ because your Christian experience will be affected in a bad way. Don't let them do that! (II John 8)

B. There is an excessive parade of humility (false) in selecting these lower beings (angels) as intercessors, rather than appealing directly to the throne of grace. (Heb. 4:16)

C. These false teachers are searching and scrutinizing minutely things that are not visible to the eye of mortals but claimed to have seen them in a vision or imagined them with their carnal mind. Don't let them declare you unworthy of the prize.

V. 19

1. Paul now gives the basic problem of any person who would practice such things as he spoke of in verse 18--"not holding the Head."

2. "Holding" = seize; hold fast; negated by "not."

3. "Head" = refers to Christ as Head of the body, the church; means these false teachers and their followers were not holding the true doctrine respecting the Great Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ; similar to Jude 3 where he says "contend for the faith" (the whole body of revealed truth delivered once to the saints.)

4. "From" = preposition indicting source or origin; refers to Christ who supplies all the body's needs.

5. "Joints and bands" = joints which connect and ligaments; both words pictures the wonderful unity in the human body by cells, muscles, arteries, veins, nerves, skin, glands, and etc.; the physical body is a marvelous machine working together under the direction of the head; physically these perform two functions: first--the supply of nutrients; second--the compacting of the frame; this is compared to the spiritual body (the church) as being members connected together and working together under the direction of the Head--Christ.

6. "Having nourishment ministered" = one word in the Greek; means being supplied, ministered to, and assisted, this of course by its Head--Christ not angels, even though He may use them to carry out His purpose; the tense reveals a continuous action, thus Christ will continue to supply.

7. "Knit together" = being joined together; the tense is continuous; the Lord said in Mat. 16:18 "I will build my church," He has, is, and will continue to do so until He calls her out at the rapture; then she will be complete and until then He operates in type--a local church--visible body of baptized believers who meet together to glorify the Lord; when all saints are raptured then His church will be assembled in heaven (Heb. 12:23) at which time it will be a local visible church; there never has been a universal, invisible church!

8. "Increaseth with the increase of God" = refers to the body growing as it receives nourishment (increase of grace) which is from God as it author--not from angels.

9. Warning: don't get caught up in man-made disciplines.

V. 20

1. "Wherefore" = in view of the fact; Paul then gives further warning against legalistic practices--man made disciplines.

2. "If" = since; in Greek this is a condition of first class sentence, assumed as being true, not a hypothetical condition; Paul gave all who said they were saved benefit of doubt and referred to them as being saved.

3. "Ye" = saints at Colosse.

4. "Be dead with Christ" = a phrase referring to being saved; the tense speaks of a past action thus referring to the point of their salvation where the old nature was crucified--died with Christ; at the point of salvation the saints recognized and realized what actually happened at the cross--they died with Christ at the cross.

5. "From" = a preposition denoting separation; death means separation; therefore, when a person is saved he is separated from the rudiments of the world.

6. "Rudiments" = elements; first principle; in context refers to elementary teachings and practices of religion.

7. "World" = kosmos; a harmonious arrangement or order; refers to the sum-total of human life in the ordered world, considered apart from God, alienated from God, and hostile to God and of the earthly things which seduces from God.

8. "Why, as though living in the world" = Paul is saying, "Why do you allow the false teachers to influence you, as though you were living and acting under those worldly principles? Those world principles ought not influence you any more than the things of this world influence those who are in their graves."

9. "Are ye subject to ordinances" = goes with "why" and means why "do you subject yourselves to ordinances" = one word in the Greek; means to obey decrees, commands, rules, and regulations, three of which are mentioned in verse 21; in verse 22, Paul makes it clear that these are man made, not divinely ordered.

V. 21

1. Paul didn't elaborate in detail about these three negatives but they seem to all deal with meat and drink. (verse 16) These false teachers had taken the Mosaic regulations and carried them further by tradition than the Lord had intended.
2. "Touch" = to fasten one's self to; to cling to; the idea is more than inadvertently touching; refers to a conscious effort to touch; negated by "not."
3. "Taste" = to eat; to take food; to take nourishment; negated by "not"; refers to the forbidden foods of OT law.
4. "Handle" = to handle in a superficial way or in a passing nature; negated by "not."
5. "Not" = a prohibition against touching, tasting, or handling these forbidden things (forbidden by man).

V. 22

1. "Which" = applies to all three of verse 21.
2. "All" = each and every one.
3. "To perish" = unto corruption; decay; decomposition; destined for corruption in the physical sense of decomposition; referring to meat and drink.
4. "With the using" = in the using; using up; consumption; their very using destroys them; nothing was permanent about them; therefore, it really was of no great importance what was eaten or what was drunk, provided it was not in itself injurious; meat and drink is not the issue; salvation is the issue!
5. "After" = according to.
6. "Commandments" = precepts; injunctions.
7. "Doctrine" = teaching; doctrinal instruction.
8. "Of men" = this means that which was taught by the Gnostics was handed down by tradition and depended on human authority only.
9. The Lord had laid down some negatives in these areas. (Lev. 11:8) These ordinances had a value among the Hebrews when it was designed to keep them as a distinct people. But they had no value in themselves, so as to make them binding on all mankind, especially Gentile Christians. These Gnostics by tradition had even gone beyond what the Lord commanded. Thus, Paul labels these things as man-made disciplines and warns against such. This does not mean that Paul is against clean, separated Christian living for he lays down some guidelines for living in Col. 3:1-4:6. He definitely believed in proper Christian standards, but standards that come from the Lord, not standards that originates in the human mind.

10. One may punish the human body to the limit by abstaining from "things" and still have a soul filled with ungodly lusts. Paul believed in the necessity of controlling the human body (I Cor. 9:27) but he warned that the real danger of man-made disciplines is the avoidance of the real problem--that of dealing with the sinful, Adamic nature. Salvation is the issue!

V. 23

1. "Which things" = a class of things; putting these precepts and teachings and all that are like them in one category.

2. "Have" = are.

3. "Indeed" = truly.

4. "Shew" = appearance; a plausible reason; a show of reason; a reputation.

5. "Wisdom" = broad and full of intelligence.

6. "Will worship" = one word in the Greek; voluntary worship; a worship which one devises and prescribes for himself, contrary to the contents and nature of the faith which ought to be directed to Christ.

7. "Humility" = having a humble opinion of one's self; described as a "shew of wisdom" thus it speaks of a mock religious attitude that pretends to be spiritual but really it is of no value because it was self-conscious humility, false humility.

8. "Neglecting" = unsparingly treatment or severity; hard treatment; speaks of rigorous self-denial and self-discipline of the body; refers to putting on sackcloth and ashes, subjecting it to painful fastings and penances, a long face, and a disregard of dress and courtesies of life, all of which may be the outcome of the most hateful pride and evil purposes of the soul.

9. "Honour" = value; negated by "not"; thus, it means that there is no real honor or real value in these things; nothing that is to be commended; the only effect is to satisfy the flesh.

10. "Satisfying" = the state of being fully supplied or completely filled; to please.

11. "Flesh" = refers to the carnal and corrupt nature.

12. Paul says that these legalistic man-made disciplines, while they appeal to men as indications of superior wisdom and devotion, have no value as remedies against sensual indulgence. Outward obedience to standards does not necessarily produce inward spirituality. Obeying man-made religious regulations might seem very spiritual outwardly to men, might appeal to men, and might seem to show piety (religious

devotion or reverence to God) and superior spirituality, but Paul states clearly that they are useless in themselves as far as God is concerned.

13. Jesus said, "Cleanse first that which is inside that the outside may be clean also." (Mat. 23:25-26)

14. Beware of man-made disciplines.

15. Salvation is still the issue!

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